

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST TEENAGERS IN THE MALL ENVIRONMENT: A CASE FROM ANKARA, TURKEY

Guliz Mugan and Feyzan Erkip

ABSTRACT

Teenagers spend much of their leisure time at shopping malls which is a result of factors such as parental constraints due to the incivility of the streets, financial dependence, and limited financial resources. Migros, a shopping mall in Ankara was chosen as the site for this research with the main purpose of studying discrimination patterns against teenagers in the mall environment. The research was carried out through observation and in-depth interviews with 104 teenagers. Results indicate that, although they have some complaints, most of the teenagers do not perceive discrimination in the mall, unlike their foreign counterparts.

INTRODUCTION

Exclusion and intolerance of differences are not new to city life. The groups with disproportionate power and autonomy tend to monopolize facilities while other groups face exclusion and marginalization. Understanding this power relationship necessitates analysis of city landscapes which take form through that relationship (Matthews & Limb, 1999). Recent additions to urban public spaces such as video surveillance cameras are examples of this duality (Koskela, 2000).

Bytheway (1995) points out that "ageism" as a type of social discrimination has been neglected in the literature and this neglect necessitates a redefinition. "Ageism is prejudice on grounds of age, just as racism and sexism is prejudice on grounds of race and sex" (Bytheway, 1995, p. 9). In this context, many young people face different kinds of

The authors would like to thank Ayberk Akçal, Asli, Çebi, Sezin Çağıl, and Tuna Şentuna, for their help in the field survey and Kirsten Ward for copy editing.

Feyzan Erkip, Interior Architecture and Environmental Design Department, Bilkent University.

Requests for reprints should be sent to Guliz Mugan, Bilkent University, Faculty of Art, Design, and Architecture, Interior Architecture and Environmental Design Department, 06800, Bilkent, Ankara, Turkey. E-mail: mguliz@bilkent.edu.tr

discrimination patterns that result from adult- and parent-imposed restrictions on their time, their choice of friends and their leisure activities. Matthews and Limb (1999) note that the "geography" of children and young people is moving away from its environmental and psychological roots toward a social and cultural geography which involves processes of exclusion, socio-spatial marginalization, and boundary conflicts between them and adults.

Amit-Talai and Wulff (1995) claim that the general adult view of youth is that they are occasionally amusing, yet potentially dangerous and disturbing. The resulting anxieties of adults about the danger potential of young people lead to an assumption that young people can be allowed in certain public spaces only when they have been socialized through the appropriate "adults" ways (Valentine, 1996). Young people who are marginalized become victims of exclusion by the hegemonic values of the adult world (Matthews & Limb, 1999). These assumptions concerning teenagers as a threat to the adult world and so-called adult spaces result in restrictions on their activities and use of many areas (Valentine, 1996); those restrictions are undeniable evidence of discrimination based on age.

Young people are often perceived as a threat to the dominant forces of the adult world; as one of the weaker groups, they experience both the social constraints of adult values and the landscapes on which those values are imprinted (Matthews & Limb, 1999). Vanderbeck and Johnson (2000) noted that "... few geographers actively engaged ... young people in their research on the meanings of these [consumption] spaces and the roles they play in their lives" (p. 8). Massey (1998) also pointed out that "a range of authorities" in wider society invent and implement rules for the spatial ordering of the population in terms of age" (p. 127) and teenagers are among the groups that are affected by this ordering. Additionally, Breitbart (1998) argued that urban teenagers are increasingly seen as undesirable occupants of public space, whose access to these spaces is limited. She added that "negative images of youth and increased privatization of public space both result in public policies that seek to remove young people from public places, delimit their geography and enforce their invisibility" (p. 307). It is also important to note that exclusion of certain individuals including teenagers from social spaces can pass unnoticed (Sibley, 1995). However, analyzing social discrimination against teenagers involves the danger of dealing with them as if they were homogeneous, without recognizing their unique personalities, diverse social grouping, and their perception of their social world (Jackson & Rodriguez-Tomé, 1993; Amit-Talai, 1995; Matthews & Limb, 1999).

Although limited in number, there is some research on Turkish youth which indicates that there are generational shifts in the attitudes and worldviews of this group that parallel the structural changes of society (Kagitcibasi, 2005, 1990; Neyzi, 2001). Kagitcibasi's (2005) longitudinal research on the value of children and family shows that "minding one's parents" which was the most important quality of a child in 1975; turned out to be one of the least important qualities in 2003. That research also indicated that the desirability of this quality by parents appeared to be correlated with urbanization level because it is more important for the urban poor and rural people. Independence and self-reliance seem to be the desired emerging qualities for urban and high-income families. However, there are also indications that control and autonomy are still perceived as compatible by many Turkish families, which indicates emotional interdependence among family members. Cross-cultural research on immigrant Turkish youth supports Kagitcibasi's model of emotional interdependence (Phalet & Claey's, 1993) although there is evidence of change across generations in accordance with the new culture that they begin to adopt (de Valk & Liefbroer, 2007).

Neyzi (2001) claims that youths are seen as the prime agent for bringing modernity to Turkey, pointing to it as the central historical role of Turkish youth since the establishment of the republic. She discusses the transition of youth from the object to the subject in the context of transformation of Turkish society. According to Breitbart (2001;412) "Turkish youth are torn between hopes of constructing a more participatory public sphere and disillusionment with the nation-state as the embodiment of modernity. The process of transition of Turkish youth from object to subject is still in the making" (p. 412). However, it has been noted by many others that Turkish youth are not homogeneous although they are shaped by the particular characteristics of the generation to which they belong (Kentel, 2005; Lukuslu, 2005; Alemdaroglu, 2005). Traditional families and school organizations in Turkey constrain young people to be conservative and "tamed," which results in a low level of political activism (Kentel, 2005; Ozgun, 2005).

In light of these observations, this paper attempts to analyze social and physical environments of shopping malls in terms of exclusion of teenagers through social discrimination. The research is based on a field survey in a shopping mall because teenagers spend much of their free time there, for reasons which are partly related to social discrimination. Information concerning discrimination patterns was obtained through observation and by in-depth interviews. Although the group

selected for the survey is somewhat homogeneous, their perceptions of discrimination was explored and tested against their socio-demographic characteristics, such as education, gender, family structure, peer relations, income, age, and leisure patterns. (We are aware that there are teenagers who do not go to malls because they cannot afford to do so. However, this study focused on discriminations inside the mall rather than general discrimination in Turkish society. Further, this group of teenagers with income levels that range from low-middle to high, provided the opportunity to cover more autonomous teenagers.) Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to enrich the analysis.

Shopping Malls as the Site of Discrimination

Shopping malls are among the most frequented leisure areas in today's urban society (Shields, 1992). The contextualization of the shopping mall began in 1950s America (Jewell, 2001), but is a new trend in Turkey. Nevertheless, Turkish people have adapted to shopping malls. According to Erkip (2003) modified global factors have been influential in making shopping malls a part of Turkish urban life. Turkish citizens seem to prefer secure and modern malls to other areas of the city.

Shopping malls began to spread in the 1990s in Turkey with the first malls built in İstanbul in 1987 and in Ankara in 1989 (Erkip, 2003; Zengel, April 2001/January 2002). Small retailers and shopping streets have been replaced by malls (Tokath & Boyaci, 1998) and have become part of urban Turkish daily life (Dogu & Erkip, 2000). As Erkip (2003) notes, "the shopping mall as a postmodern site matched the changing shopping and consumption requirements of Turkish urban citizens. The development of the shopping mall turns out to be timely for the Turkish urban citizen searching for modernity through new identity components in consumption patterns" (p. 1073).

Shopping malls are designed to persuade users to adopt certain physical and social behaviors related to shopping (Goss, 1993). This makes both the social and physical environments of the mall crucial in shaping users' behavior. Erkip (2003, p. 1090) indicates that "the shopping mall is the space where global and local meet successfully, yet with potential problems," pointing out that they create new forms of exclusion, particularly for the urban poor. They have found it necessary to exclude or marginalize certain social groups, such as the unemployed, the homeless, and young people who are considered to be nonconsumers or disruptive. This exclusion is achieved through discriminatory policies (Sacedo, 2003). Koskela (2000) describes the pur-

pose of surveillance in shopping malls as a means of excluding people on the basis of their appearance in order to create a "purified" urban experience (see also Sibley, 1995). Young people invite exclusion when their appearance challenges adult values. Yet teenagers might be potential shoppers and when they are excluded, it limits consumption. The arguments that define malls as exclusionary spaces in which diverse groups of users are served, highlight the differing usage of the malls by different users.

The meaning and uses of shopping malls have been outlined in recent discussions of geography concerning specific individuals and social groups (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995; Miller et al., 1998; Readdick & Mullis, 1997; Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2000; White & Sutton, 2001). Erkip (2003), in analyzing the situations in Turkey, notes that spatial arrangements in shopping malls are flexible so that different user groups are attracted to different facilities and events. Vanderbeck and Johnson (2000) discussed the tensions between different users of the mall who have diverse expectations, attitudes, and socio-demographic characteristics.

The role of the social environment of the mall in social discrimination becomes important with "increasing social diversity of groups who use shopping malls" (Zukin, 1998, p. 830). According to Goss (1993), elderly people, those without shopping bags, and "suspicious" visitors (teenagers, single men, the unkempt, and social science researchers) can easily attract the attention of security because they differ from the expected shoppers. The social environment of malls may be defined by its exclusivity in terms of requirements for both the appearance of visitors and the types of behaviors allowed (White & Sutton, 2001). Because the primary concern of shopping malls is "to trap the consumer in the world of consumption" (Goss, 1993, p. 32), class-based segregation and social differentiation are established by the prices. Further discrimination takes the form of uniformed personnel—police and security guards. These restrictions in the mall may create problems for certain disadvantaged groups including teenagers (White & Sutton, 2001).

Built environments are designed and managed as reflections of power and used to dominate victims of marginalization and exclusion (Matthews & Limb, 1999). As Goss (1993) states, mall designers manipulate the behavior of shoppers by consciously designing a symbolic landscape that provokes consumption-oriented behaviors. The predefined social environment of a mall plays a substantial role in the design of the physical environment; the physical structure consciously produces social segregation and differentiation. Thus, it may be necessary to look for discriminating factors that aim to attract certain groups of

people as the main target of the mall space. Social discrimination patterns that are reflected in the physical environment of shopping malls are the significant actors in the exclusion process to protect patrons from the confusion of social diversity (Goss, 1993).

Discrimination Against Teenagers in Shopping Malls

Numerous studies have noted that teenagers are one of the important marginalized groups attracted to the mall (Anthony, 1985; Lewis, 1989; Matthews et al., 2000b; Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2000; Copeland, 2004), and malls have become a crucial component of teenagers' social worlds (Lewis, 1989; Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2000; Haytko & Baker, 2004).

Young people have more leisure time, greater aspirations, and less responsibility than they will have later on in life, but they are restricted by lack of power, legal and parental limitations, and access to spaces (Hendry et al., 1993). Furthermore, as Punch (2000) notes, urban spaces children can use are limited by threatening factors, e.g., assault and traffic. As a result, children and teenagers spend more time at the mall than other settings (Anthony, 1985; Lewis, 1989; Hendry et al., 1993).

According to Anthony (1985), Matthews et al. (2000b), and Readdick and Mullis (1997), the mall is a gathering place for young people where they develop their social life, become involved in social interactions, and escape from the monotony of home and school. It is a meeting place and "hang out" (White & Sutton, 2001). Mall space is defined as a "third place"—a place to enjoy a social life, a place other than home and school (Anthony, 1985; Lewis, 1989). It can even be defined as a "fourth environment"—"the environment outside the home, playground, and specifically child-oriented institutions" (Vliet, 1983, p. 567). Teenagers spend up to five hours a day in shopping malls watching each other, playing video games, having snacks, and cruising around (Anthony, 1985).

There are therefore two contradicting points of view. On one hand, the shopping mall is a setting of "social inclusion, a convenient and accessible meeting point where they [teenagers] can gather to assert their sense of belonging and group membership" (Matthews et al., 2000b, p. 287). On the other hand, the mall is considered to be a contradictory and exclusionary space for many young people because of their limited resources and deviant behavior, and because the mall is mainly for consumption (White & Sutton, 2001; Salcedo, 2003).

Children and young people are seemingly invisible in the built environments (Matthews & Limb, 1999). This is a result of adults' redefinition of the public domain as their own private space (Matthews et al.,

2000a; Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2000). This perception of being a threat to the mall environment leads to the establishment of discriminatory policies (Salcedo, 2003). These may include curfews, parent escort requirements, strict control by security guards, or outright removal from the mall.

Discrimination in the social environment can also be reflected in the physical environment of the mall. For example, Zukin (1998) claims that "exclusivity was reinforced by locating many suburban malls far away from bus lines and train stations, surrounding them with gigantic parking lots, and turning the shops inward, effectively walling them away from the outdoors" (p. 829).

Sibley (1995) stated that response of mall arrangements to adolescents is shaped through the connection between the function and design of the space, as determined by design professionals and commercial interests, and the consideration of one group as "deviant," and threatening to the projected image of the malls. As Sibley (1995, p. xii) points out, "exclusion may be an unintended consequence of commercial development" of the mall; adolescents are acutely aware of this, while it is much less evident to the adults. The present research analyzed the perception of discrimination by teenagers in the mall environment and how it is shaped by the imprints of social and physical environments.

RESEARCH SETTING AND METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study was to analyze social discrimination against teenagers in the mall environment from their point of view. White and Sutton (2001) claimed that "perceptions of 'youth' as a problem need to be tempered by the realization that many of the behaviors that are the target of condemnation and chastisement are not unique to young people" (p. 8). This view prompted further analysis of the position of teenagers in society. A shopping mall in Ankara was used as an appropriate site to analyze perceived social discrimination against teenagers. Migros Shopping Mall was chosen because of its significance in the urban public life of Ankara, its location, its diversity of users, and the variety of leisure activities it offers. Migros takes its name from the market chain it houses. It is a suburban mall which opened on August 27, 1999 and was the biggest shopping center in Turkey at the time. Sozer (2002) noted that Migros is separate from the rest of the city; it is a controlled and self-contained space with many stores and a variety of leisure activities. Unlike many malls in suburban

areas that are accessible primarily by private transport, Migros Shopping Mall was placed at the hub of mass transport—public buses, mini-buses, and especially the subway.

The center is a four-story building with seven gates. At each gate, visitors are confronted with pass-through x-ray machines and security staff. This makes Migro far from a real public space in Ankara (Sozer, 2002). An elegant atmosphere is reflected in the decoration of the mall. Sozer (2002) claims the architecture serves to make consumers feel important and comfortable so that they will spend more time and money there.

We conducted our survey in the Center with a group of teenagers as subjects. A stratified sampling method was used to keep the number of female and male respondents equal. A time sampling method was used to approach teenagers; the interviews were done during the weekdays after school hours and on weekends to avoid bias due to age and school differences. All respondents were informed of the aim of the study and participated on a voluntary basis. Each respondent was questioned separately. A total of 104 teenagers participated in the study.

The following hypotheses were generated:

1. Social and physical environments of shopping malls reflect discrimination against teenagers.
2. Discrimination varies according to their socio-demographic characteristics.

In-depth interviews were based on 49 questions. The first part of the interviews focused on demographic information such as sex, age, education level, income level, and available pocket money. The teenagers were then asked about their leisure-time activities in general. The third part contained questions on their shopping mall preferences in Ankara. The last part involved specific questions on the Migros Shopping Mall such as the preferred time of visit, time and money spent in the mall, the aim of the visit, and mode of transportation to the mall. They were asked to evaluate Migros with respect to the things they consider a mall should contain, what they liked and disliked, what was missing or deficient in the social and physical environment, and their reasons for choosing Migros over other malls. There were also questions related to attitudes and behaviors of the staff and security personnel, the problems they confront with shopkeepers, staff, and security personnel, the most preferred shops/restaurants/cafes, the age group they think Migros targets, and the mall they would prefer if they were adults. This last part was aimed at collecting information on discrimination the teenagers believed they face in the social and

physical environments of the mall. Most of the questions were open-ended to avoid restricting the responses. Direct questions about the issue of discrimination were avoided to prevent bias. In addition to the interviews, observations were made on the teenagers' overall characteristics—their income, life style, family structure, peer relations, and attitudes.

Socio-demographic Characteristics and Leisure Preferences of the Respondents

Ages of respondents ranged from 13 to 19, and they were categorized into three groups (13–14, 15–17, and 18–19). They were from three education levels (primary school graduate, attending high school, and attending university). The mode was in the 15–17 high school group. Since all respondents were financially dependent on their families income level was determined: the majority of the respondents were from middle and high-middle income families. All respondents had pocket money and the majority believed it was sufficient (Table 1).

The sample group identified the mall as their most-preferred leisure space, followed by cafes and restaurants, and friends' homes. For teenagers, physical environmental is an important determinant of their mall preferences, especially the location and accessibility. Although a few also mentioned design characteristics such as external appearance of the mall and cleanliness, the facilities and variety of shops were more important. In this respect, teenagers were like most people in Turkey in terms of their preferences (Erkip, 2003). Most of the teenagers go to malls for the movie theatres, to meet and hang out with friends, to shop, and for the food courts (see Table 2 for reasons for visiting the malls).

Perception of Discrimination

Quantitative aspects are provided through descriptive statistics regarding the factors that determine discrimination patterns as perceived by the teenagers in the Migros Shopping Center. In addition, some of the findings gathered were through narratives relating to subjects the teenagers themselves brought up during interviews.

With regard to our two hypotheses, it was expected that discrimination in the mall would differ according to the teenagers' socio-demographic characteristics. The relationship between discriminating factors and socio-demographic characteristics were tested through chi-square analysis. No significant relationship was found except between the amount of money spent in Migros by teenagers and income level of their families ($\chi^2 = 44.173$, $df = 8$, $p = .000$). The findings indicated

Table 1. Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	52	50
Female	52	50
Total	104	100

Age	Number	Percentage
13-14	25	24
15-17	59	56.7
18-19	20	19.2
Total	104	100

Education level	Number	Percentage
Primary school	21	20.2
High school	67	64.4
University	16	15.4
Total	104	100

Income level	Number	Percentage
Low – Low-Middle	3	2.9
Middle – High-Middle	87	83.7
High	14	13.5
Total	104	100

that social environment is less important for teenagers than the variety of facilities and stores in the mall. Only 10.7% of the respondents noted any importance of the social environment including security, prices, social status of visitors, and attitudes and behaviors of staff (Table 3). Physical environment was considered even less important.

The social planning and management of mall environments are crucial in the exclusion of young people and other disadvantaged groups (White & Sutton, 2001). The staff, shopkeepers, and security personnel

Table 2. Leisure Preferences of the Respondents

Preferred leisure spaces	Number	Percentage
Shopping Malls	73	33.0
Play areas	2	0.9
Streets	13	5.9
Café/restaurants	61	27.6
Friends' houses	52	23.5
Game-areas/saloons	20	9.0
billiards, computer games, etc.)		
Total	221 ^a	100

The reasons for mall preferences	Number	Percentage
Social environment (security, familiarity, socio-economic status of people in the mall)	15	15.2
Physical environment (design elements)	50	50.5
Facilities and variety in the mall	34	34.3
Total	99	100

Reasons for visiting the malls	Number	Percentage
Shopping	66	16.7
Eating/spending time in food court	59	14.9
Browsing/Networking	28	7.1
Meeting and hanging out with friends	77	19.5
Killing time	56	14.2
Forming friendship	8	2.0
Going to movie theatre	84	21.3
Window shopping	17	4.3
Total	395 ^b	100

^a Total of multiple counting for leisure spaces²

^b Total of multiple counting for the aim of visit

² Multiple counting refers to the multiple responses for a number of questions that necessitate a distinction between the number of responses and the number of people responding.

Table 3. The Most Important Aspects That a Mall Should Provide

The most important aspects that a mall should provide	Number	Percentage
Social environment	11	10.7
Physical environment	6	5.8
Variety of facilities and stores	86	83.5
Total	103	100

of the malls are important components of this process. For this reason, teenagers' evaluation of the attitudes and behaviors of these groups was used to test the first hypothesis.

The findings show that 76.9% of the teenagers did not notice any discrimination in the attitudes and behaviors of staff and security personnel and evaluated them as being polite and sensitive. The following quotation is an example of these positive evaluations:

Staff and especially security personnel are very polite. Sometimes I think that there is something wrong with this, because they pay more respect to me than to my mom.

(14-year-old male)

However, the remaining 23.1% of the respondents had some complaints about the staff and security personnel as indicated below:

Shopkeepers treat us very differently compared to adults. They think that we do not have money and enough financial resources to afford the things they sell. However, this is not the case. We have money, sometimes a lot more money than they can imagine.

(15-year-old female)

Problems between teenagers and staff and security personnel would be an important indicator of perceived discrimination. The findings show that 83.7% of the teenagers claimed they had no such problems. Those who did have problems had simply been warned by security for making noise, moving tables in the food court, and running and shouting.

We had several warnings from security due to the noise we made. But sometimes we got angry looks from security guards just because we strolled in groups. Every time I got a warning, I argued with those staff. We are not the only ones who make noise, but we are the only age group that gets warnings. This is not fair.

(19-year-old male)

Once we had shouted to support the team we are fans of and security tried to send us away. We ran off. After that, we tried not to be recognized by that guy for a while. Now it is ok. We come here everyday.

(17-year-old male)

The reason teenagers do not notice any different treatment and do not have problems with staff can be explained by their behavior—which is like adult customers'. As one of the security guards stressed:

For us, there is no difference between a teenager and an adult person. We try to control the mall environment to provide peace, comfort, and security for all our customers. Whether a teenager or an adult, if he does not obey the required rules of *appropriate manner and behavior*, we will not let him stay in our mall . . . we set a certain standard and age is not our concern. Our concern is to provide efficiency for shopping, and teenagers as customers deserve to shop in an efficient environment as long as they behave in an *appropriate way* . . . we interfere with some of our customers and some of these might be teenagers, but these warnings are for the benefit of them and of other customers. Otherwise, there would not be any difference between a shopping mall and a public park.

When the features of Migros teenagers disliked are considered, 57 complained of the social environment (see Table 4). Other dislikes were related to the physical environment and facilities. Although some of the dislikes (crowding, noise) are also valid for other user groups, teenagers pointed out injustices due to their age, which can be considered as perceived discrimination.

It is very difficult to stroll in the crowd. Especially for our age group. We come here in groups and we want to stroll side by side but security do not let us.

(15-year-old female)

I do not like the crowding in Migros. It is very difficult to find a place to sit. I do not understand why all the people are here at the same time. Weekends should be young peoples' leisure time. Maybe it is better to separate the usage of such places according to age and activities.

(14-year-old male)

Table 4. Dislikes of Teenagers in Migros

Dislikes of teenagers in Migros	Number	Percentage
Spending lots of money	3	3.5
Crowding, noise	35	40.7
Attitudes of staff and security personnel	3	3.5
Physical characteristics of the space (furniture, colors, lighting, cleaning etc.)	12	14.0
Location and transportation problem	2	2.3
Prices of facilities in the mall	12	14.0
The exterior factors (outside of Migros)	2	2.3
Giving lots of space to certain shops	9	10.5
Smoking and some restaurants that serve alcohol	3	3.5
Social status of some visitors and beggars in front of the entrances	4	4.7
Opening and closing times of Migros	1	1.2
Total	86 ^a	100.0

^a Total of multiple counting for reasons of dislikes

It is interesting to note that despite complaints about discrimination in the social environment, they, themselves, suggest discriminating patterns for other visitors.

Among the dislikes and problems, the teenagers also mentioned the prices in restaurants, cafes, shops, and other facilities. Contrary to what Anthony (1985) and Lewis (1989) found in the California Mall and the New England Mall, the teenagers in Migros spend lots of money there and 85.6% stated that their pocket money was sufficient for what they wanted to do. It also was found that 42.7% of the respondents spent their money in the movie theatre and 39% of them in the food court. In the interviews, respondents were asked whether the prices affected their choice of Migros. Although some mentioned prices among their dislikes, 69.9% claimed that prices were not a determining factor in their choice.

Although the teenagers claim that their pocket money is sufficient for the facilities they use, it is not enough for shopping; 68.3% said

that they spent the least amount of time browsing in the shops. Thus, financial limitations could be one of the reasons for perceived discrimination. Shopping was mentioned by 17.7% of teenagers as the third most important reason for visiting Migros.

I do not want to spend my time window shopping. I cannot shop because I want to save my money for other things. In other words, my money is not enough for shopping.

(13-year-old male)

I spent the least time in shops because I do my shopping with my mom. I do not have credit cards; if I had, I could shop.

(14-year-old female)

Another important way to evaluate perceived discrimination in the social environment is to look for changes in behavior in order to adapt. When teenagers were asked whether they were changing their behaviors, 69.2% claimed they did not need to do so.

I try to be careful when I am talking to my friends. For example, I do not swear. But this is not specific to Migros. This is a general rule of community. Isn't it?

(13-year-old female)

Why should I behave differently? I feel comfortable wherever I go. Migros is not an exception. I behave as I want to behave.

(16-year-old female)

The second aspect of the first hypothesis relates to the physical environment of Migros. It was expected that the physical environment would reflect discrimination patterns. As Matthews and Limb (1999) argued, the work of environmental planners and architects commonly reflect the dominant perceptions of the society which leads to further marginalization of groups that are already on the edge. Only a small number of teenagers referred to the physical environment a mall should offer (see Table 3).

As noted by Erkip (1997), in urban environments, especially in cities, spatial constraints and physical proximity are extremely important in the use of fixed urban services. In our study, 77.5% of the respondents stated that they use mass transport (47.4% use the subway and 30.1% use buses) to go to Migros; thus Migros is accessible for teenagers without being dependent on their families.

When teenagers were asked why they preferred Migros over other malls in Ankara, physical proximity with convenient transportation was mentioned most (23.6%). (See Table 5).

Table 5. The Reasons Teenagers Preferred Migros over Other Malls in Ankara

The reasons of why teenagers preferred Migros over other malls in Ankara

	Number	Percentage
Security	19	8.2
Cleanness, clarity and order	10	4.3
Interference of the family	16	6.9
Space that includes the favorite shops and stores	15	6.4
Location, physical proximity and convenient transportation	55	23.6
The prices that suits my budget	10	4.3
Physical characteristics of Migros (colors, furniture, lighting, comfort etc.)	23	9.9
Social environment (security, familiarity, socio-economic status of people in the mall)	38	16.3
Variety of facilities other than shopping (movie theatre, food court etc.)	45	19.3
Positive attitudes of staff	2	0.9
Total	233 ^a	100.0

^a Total of multiple counting for reasons of Migros preference of teenagers compared to other malls

We live in Batikent and my school is also in Batikent. So it is very easy to come here for me. If Migros was located far from my house and school, I would prefer some other malls.

(16-year-old female)

I come here because my parents are familiar with the environment. We have some relatives working here. So they readily let me come here.

(15-year-female)

It seems that location and accessibility contribute to discrimination patterns against teenagers and restrict their visits to other malls in Ankara. The restrictions are based on need for family permission, one's

legal driving age, being financially dependent on family, and place of residence. As expected, when the teenagers were asked about the reasons they could not visit other malls in Ankara, they mostly cited distance from home, transportation problems, not being familiar with the area, and lack of family permission.

Teenagers were asked what they disliked and what deficiencies they observed in the physical environment (Table 6).

We do not get fresh air and natural light very much. They could design an open space or maybe the ceiling could be designed to be semi-open in the summer.

(14-year-old female)

There is a ventilation problem. It is too hot in winter and too cold in summer. In addition, they should locate toilets closer to the food court area.

(18-year-old female)

Table 6. Dislikes and Deficiencies Related to the Physical Environment

Dislikes and Deficiencies Related to the Physical Environment	Number	Percentage
Movie theatres, restaurants, cafes	6	3.2
Lack of some entertainment facilities like bowling	14	7.4
Variety and number of stores and shops	3	1.6
Size and complexity	7	3.7
Lighting and ventilation problems	10	5.3
Toilets, cleaning and hygiene	7	3.7
Problems related to orientation and wayfinding	1	0.5
Colors and artificial greenness (palm trees)	53	28.0
Lack of music	82	43.4
Conceptual decoration for special days	4	2.1
Lack of smoking zone	2	1.1
Total	189 ^a	100

^a Total of multiple counting for dislikes related to the physical environment

Lack of music is perceived as the most important deficiency. Some teenagers even perceive this as discrimination against them. Music preferences varied depending on age and personal tastes, but they mostly prefer pop music.

I would like to listen to pop music here. But they do not play it and I believe that it is just because of our age. Think of the things that would happen if there was music! The ones, who are crazy like me, will start to dance, sing the songs. They do not want to deal with young people a lot, so there will not be music here.

(15-year-old female)

I believe music is necessary. But, in my opinion, the main reason that they do not play music is the young people; they are afraid that the young people would use this place like a bar or disco if they broadcast music here.

(16-year-old female)

Their preferred colors for Migros also vary. Like music, color preferences change according to gender, personal interests, and age. Most of the teenagers stated that they want lively colors instead of the brown and beige tones of Migros. Some of them asserted that teenagers should also be involved in deciding the colors of such places; otherwise all colors would be determined according to adult preferences. It seems that teenagers as a user group, want to take part in the design process of the mall. In other words, they perceive discrimination as not resulting from the elements of the physical environment, but from the process of designing those elements.

If I were the designer, I would use metallic colors. It seems to me that it would be much more modern. With these colors, Migros seems old-fashioned.

(19-year-old male)

They do not let us to take part in the choice of those colors. If I were the manager of Migros, I would use more lively colors or maybe change colors every year. These colors seem to be chosen for adults. It seems that they did not consider our age groups while choosing them.

(15-year-old female)

One interesting statement relating to perceived discrimination was the complaint of some teenagers about the play and game areas. Matthews (1995) argues that playgrounds isolate and contain children within public spaces and lead to "a process of childhood ghettoization" (cited in Matthews and Limb, 1999, p. 69); according to those authors, the recent provision of children's leisure spaces by the private sector

is an example of this process. It seems that some teenagers in Migros noticed this discrimination.

I hate the game area in the basement and these game machines (*pointing to the animated machines in the food court*). I believe that they put these here intentionally. The aim is to distract children and keep them away from the store. They are laying traps for us.

(15-year-old male)

Look at this game area (*pointing to the game area in the basement*). It is located in a secret, invisible corner. They try to put us in it, so we cannot disturb them. But they cannot force us to be there.

(14-year-old male)

When they were asked the age group targeted by Migros, 48% claimed there was no particular group; 27.5% felt that Migros targets adults—very close to the 24.5% who saw teenagers as the target group. Those who claimed that adults are favored at Migros, believe this arises from adults' financial means, which could be seen as a perceived discrimination pattern by that group. However, unlike their foreign counterparts, the teenagers interviewed in a Turkish mall do not seem to perceive social discrimination as indicated by the following comments:

I think there is a target age group in Migros. The ones who are over 18 are targeted because they have credit cards and also can earn their own money and buy whatever they want. They are not dependent like us.

(17-year-old female)

Everyone can satisfy their needs here in Migros. There is no favoring of a single age group.

(14-year-old female)

According to Matthews et al. (2006b, cited from Soja, 1996), stubbornly hanging out together in the mall can be interpreted as the "spatiality of inclusion." Some argue that teenagers have few safe alternatives to malls (Lewis, 1989); in this sense, the use of malls by teenagers is a social "necessity," engendered by the social discrimination they face in other spheres. However, when this group was asked whether there are some leisure spaces where they face bad treatment due to their age, 74% of them said they had not encountered such negative attitudes.

The teenagers' evaluation of levels of discrimination in other leisure spaces can also be explained by what Punch (2000) and Hendry et al.

(1993) describe as their lack of knowledge about any leisure spaces other than the mall and their limited use of those spaces (see also Silbereisen and Toch, 1994 who see shopping malls as "fourth environments").

According to 41 (40.6%) of the respondents, shopping malls were the most secure and comfortable spaces to spend their leisure time; of this group, 25 named Migros. It seems that parental restrictions shape their preference for the mall: 51.9% claimed that their parents and families had influenced their mall preferences; 72% of their families preferred Migros.

According to Hendry et al. (1993), teenagers believe that the main reasons for their families' interference in their mall preferences are security, familiarity, location of the mall, and accessibility. It is that concern for security that primarily leads teenagers to choose malls as their main leisure site. This same concern for security also prompts parental restrictions and interference in the mall usage of teenagers; this could be perceived as a form of discrimination. (Incivility of the streets in the Turkish cities in terms of traffic conditions makes shopping malls alternatives for many parents of middle and upper income groups (Erkip, 2005).

In sum, teenagers' choice of malls as their favorite leisure space can be a result of discrimination against them—discrimination by way of parental restrictions, security concerns, accessibility, and limited financial resources. These factors may lead to restrictions in the choice of places to spend their leisure time and may limit the use of leisure spaces other than malls (see also Hendry et al., 1993). When teenagers were asked which mall they would prefer if they were adults, 47.5% also chose Migros. Only 15.8% indicated that they would prefer other leisure spaces like bars or clubs that they could not use currently. The interesting point is that of 48 teenagers who would prefer Migros if they were adults, 23 had not been to any other malls in Ankara and 7 had visited only 2 other malls.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In this research, ageist discrimination was analyzed with a focus on teenagers. Due to their negative image, they confront ageist discrimination in different parts of society. Within this context, the social and physical environments of the mall space were analyzed and found to reflect different social discrimination patterns against marginalized groups such as the unemployed, the homeless, and young people (Si-

bley, 1995; Jackson, 1998; Miller et al., 1998; Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2000; White & Sutton, 2001; Salcedo, 2003). In order to study differences in usage of shopping malls, ageist discrimination against teenagers was discussed in a selected mall, Migros Shopping Mall in Ankara.

Although the study found dislikes, problems, injustices, and perceived discrimination patterns, teenagers did not perceive significant discrimination in the social and physical spheres of Migros. It is also important to note that most of their complaints are not unique to teenagers, since social discrimination patterns apply to different groups of people in different spheres of Turkish society. Spatial segregation is observed in many urban areas on the basis of income level.

Concerning the social environment, teenagers did not seem to perceive discrimination. They did not think they were treated differently by staff and security personnel, and other mall visitors. They had few complaints about the cost of facilities. Further, they stated that they did not need to change the way they behaved in order to adapt to the social environment, and they did not think that Migros targeted or favored certain age groups. Apart from some comments concerning lack of music and play and game areas that they see as intentionally designed to discriminate against teenagers, the physical environment of Migros was not perceived as discriminating by virtue of its design.

The findings of this study indicate that the hypotheses of ageist discrimination against teenagers in shopping malls were not verified in the Turkish context. In this research, the mall space did not appear to reflect social discrimination patterns that are assumed to be perceived by teenagers. There would be two reasons for this. First, the mall itself is designed and constructed to discriminate against certain individuals, not just teenagers (see Goss, 1993; Jewell, 2001; White & Sutton, 2001; Salcedo, 2003). In other words, the mall as a controlled and private environment excludes certain groups and certain forms of behaviors, as a matter of security. As a result, the teenagers behave in a way the mall expects. In other words, unlike their foreign counterparts, teenagers in a Turkish mall do not perceive social discrimination. The discrimination of teenagers seems to be accepted by them in view of the restrictions of and exclusion from alternative leisure spaces and malls.

Second, the social structure of Turkey is quite rigid and improper behavior from anyone in any group is not tolerated, including the teenagers. The mall space, as a private part of this social structure, provides a more controlled environment than the street or other public spaces. The space itself provides clues to teenagers and other social groups on how to behave; the teenagers must act like adults and this

may affect their perception of ageist discrimination. This view is accepted as a limitation of this study, and another limitation is that the teenagers who feel discriminated against would choose not to go to Migros and thus not be part of the study. Thus, further studies on ageist discrimination faced by teenagers in different mall spaces and in different social spheres in general are needed. In this way, it would be possible to compare the way teenagers behave in malls to the way they behave in other leisure spaces and thus be able to determine the role of predefined sets of expectations and assumptions.

Beyond the differences among age groups in malls, other socio-demographic differences among users also need to be analyzed; further attention should be paid to different types of social discrimination in different leisure spaces in terms of the degree to which they are accessible and the users they target may reflect social discrimination.

One of the social implications of this study related to the involvement of teenagers in the design and management process leading to improvement in the physical structure of the mall so that it better meets the needs and demands of different age groups. However, most of the teenagers were not interested in the physical environment and its elements. Further studies might determine whether this lack of concern for the physical environment is seen in adults and in teenagers in different societies. Further studies are also needed on the impact of involvement of teenagers in shaping the social and physical environments. In the Turkish context, there is a lack of involvement in the physical environment in general, and participation of children and teenagers may turn out to help make them more environmentally aware citizens as adults.

REFERENCES

- Alemdaroglu, A. (2005). Bir "imkan" olarak genclik [Youth as an opportunity]. *Birikim*, 196, 21-29.
- Amit-Talai, V. (1995). The "multi" cultural youth. In V. Amit-Talai & H. Wulff, (Eds.), *Youth cultures: A cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 223-233). London: Routledge.
- Amit-Talai, V., & Wulff, H. (Eds.). (1995). *Youth cultures: A cross-cultural perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Anthony, K. H. (1985). The shopping mall: A teenage hangout. *Adolescence*, 20(78), 307-312.
- Banton, M. (1994). *Discrimination*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bodur, M., & Sangollu, E. (2005). Environmental sensitivity in a developing country: Consumer classification and implications. *Environment and Behavior*, 37(4), 487-510.

- Breitbart, M. M. (1998). "Dana's mystical tunnel": Young people's designs for survival and change in the city. In T. Skelton & G. Valentine (Eds.), *Cool places: Geographies of youth culture* (pp. 305-327). London: Routledge.
- Bytheway, B. (1995). *Ageism*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Copeland, A. (2004). Public space: A rights-based approach. *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(3), 40-45.
- de Valk, H. A. G., & Liefbroer, A. C. (2007). Parental influence on union formation preferences among Turkish, Moroccan, and Dutch adolescents in the Netherlands. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 38, 487-505.
- Doğu, U., & Erkip, F. (2000). Spatial factors affecting way finding and orientation: A case study in a shopping mall. *Environment and Behavior*, 32(6), 731-755.
- Erkip, F. (1997). The distribution of urban public services: The case of parks and recreational services in Ankara. *Cities*, 14(6), 353-361.
- Erkip, F. (2003). The shopping mall as an emergent public space in Turkey. *Environment and Planning A*, 35, 1073-1093.
- Erkip, F. (2005). The rise of the shopping mall in Turkey: The use and appeal of a mall in Ankara. *Cities*, 22, 89-108.
- Goss, J. (1993). The magic of the mall: An analysis of form, function, and meaning in the contemporary retail built environment. *Annals of Association of American Geographers*, 83(1), 18-47.
- Haytko, D. L. & Baker, J. (2004). It's all at the mall: Exploring adolescent girls' experiences. *Journal of Retailing*, 80, 67-83.
- Hendry, L. B., & Schucksmith, J., Love, J. G., & Glendinning, A. (1993). *Young people's leisure and lifestyles*. London: Routledge.
- Jackson, S., & Rodriguez-Tomé, H. (Eds.). (1993). *Adolescence and its social worlds*. Hove: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Jackson, P., & Holbrook, B. (1995). Multiple meanings: Shopping and the cultural politics of identity. *Environment and Planning A*, 27, 1913-1930.
- Jackson, P. (1998). Domesticating the street: The contested spaces of the high street and the mall. In N. Fyfe (Ed.), *Images of the street: Representation, experience and control in public space* (pp. 176-191). London: Routledge.
- Jewell, N. (2001). The fall and rise of the British mall. *The Journal of Architecture*, 6, 317-378.
- Kagitcibasi, C. (2005). Value of children and family change: A three-decade portrait from Turkey. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 54, 317-337.
- Kagitcibasi, C. (1990). *Insan, aile, kültür* [People, Family, Culture]. Remzi Kitabevi, Istanbul.
- Kentel, F. (2005). Türkiye'de genc olmak: Konformizm ya da siyasetin yeniden insasi [Being young in Turkey: Conformism or restructuring the politics]. *Birikim*, 196, 11-17.
- Koskela, H. (2000). "The gaze without eyes": Video-surveillance and the changing nature of urban space. *Progress in Human Geography*, 24(2), 243-265.
- Lewis, G. H. (1989). Rats and bunnies: Core kids in an American mall. *Adolescence*, 24(96) 881-889.
- Lukuslu, D. (2005). 1960' lardan 2000' lere genclik tipleri: Maddeci basarici manager tipten yuppie ve tiki' ye [Youth types from 1960s to 2000s: From materialistic success-oriented manager type to yuppie and tiki]. *Birikim*, 196, 30-36.

- Massey, D. (1998). The spatial construction of youth cultures. In T. Skelton & G. Valentine (Eds.), *Cool places: Geographies of youth cultures* (pp. 121–129). London: Routledge.
- Matthews, H., & Limb, M. (1999). Defining an agenda for the geography of children: Review and prospect. *Progress in Human Geography*, 23(1), 61–90.
- Matthews, H., Limb, M., & Taylor, M. (2000a). The “street as third space.” In S. L. Holloway & G. Valentine (Eds.), *Children's geographies* (pp. 63–79). London: Routledge.
- Matthews, H., Taylor, M., Percy-Smith, B., & Limb, M. (2006b). The unacceptable flaneur: The shopping mall as a teenager hangout. *Childhood*, 7(3), 279–294.
- Miller, D., Jackson, P., Thrift, N., Holbrook, B., & Rowlands, M. (1998). *Shopping, place and identity*. London: Routledge.
- Neyzi, L. (2001). Object or subject? The paradox of “youth” in Turkey. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 33, 411–432.
- Ozgun, C. (2005). Genc kadinlar- “yeni kizlar”: Hangi rol modelleri? [Young women, “new girls”: Which role models?] *Birikim*, 196, 64–68.
- Phalet, K., & Claeys, W. (1993). A comparative study of Turkish and Belgian youth. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 24, 319–343.
- Punch, S. (2000). Children's strategies for creating play spaces. In S. L. Holloway & G. Valentine (Eds.), *Children's geographies* (pp. 48–52). London: Routledge.
- Readdick, C. A., & Mullis, R. L. (1997). Adolescents and adults at the mall: Dyadic interactions. *Adolescence*, 32(126), 313–322.
- Salcedo, R. (2003). When the global meets the local at the mall. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 46(8), 1084–1103.
- Shields, R. (Ed.). (1992). *Lifestyle shopping: The subject of consumption*. London: Routledge.
- Sibley, D. (1995). *Geographies of exclusion*. London: Routledge.
- Silbereisen, R. K., & Todt, E. (Eds.). (1994). *Adolescence in context: The interplay of family, school, peers, and work in adjustment*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Sozer, S. (2002). *Non-places as the new phenomena of contemporary architectural environment*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Ankara: Middle East Technical University.
- Tokath, N., & Boyaci, Y. (1998). The changing retail industry and retail landscapes: The case of post-1980 Turkey. *Cities*, 15, 345–359.
- Valentine, G. (1996). Angels and devils: Moral landscapes of childhood. *Environment and Planning D. Society and Space*, 14, 581–599.
- Vanderbeck, R. M., & Johnson, J. H. (2000). “That's the only place where you can hang out”: Urban young people and the space of the mall. *Urban Geography*, 21(1), 5–25.
- Vliet, W. V. (1983). Exploring the fourth environment: An examination of the home range of city and suburban teenagers. *Environment and Behavior*, 15(5), 567–588.
- White, R., & Sutton, A. (2001). Social planning for mall redevelopment: An Australian case-study. *Local Environment*, 6(1), 65–80.
- Zengel, R. (April 2001/January 2002). Tarih içinde değişen tüketim mekanlari [Changing consumption spaces throughout the history]. *Ege Mimarlik*, 40–41, 10–13.
- Zukin, S. (1998). Urban lifestyles: Diversity and standardization in spaces of consumption. *Urban Studies*, 35(5–6), 825–839.

Copyright of *Adolescence* is the property of Libra Publishers Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.